

# Health Mate

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## *Cigar Smoking- A Safe Alternative?*

### **Here – Have a Cigar**

You're going out with the "boys" for your bachelor party, your wife just had a baby, hanging out with the "boys" playing cards-sound familiar to you men? Sure why not have a cigar! What about the women; yes women are smoking cigars too. As the incidence of cigar smoking continues to rise, especially among young adults, I thought it appropriate to address how safe of an alternative is this form of tobacco use. April is Cancer Control Month; one way to control cancer is to look closely at our personal lifestyle behaviors. First let's look at the facts.

### **Cigar Smoking Causes Several Cancers and Lung and Heart Disease**

A report released 4/10/98 by the National Cancer Institute (NCI) in Bethesda, Md., shows that daily cigar smoking causes cancers of the lip, tongue, mouth, throat, larynx, esophagus, and lung, as well as chronic obstructive pulmonary (lung) disease and coronary heart disease. The health effects of cigar smoking are the focus of one of the eight chapters making up NCI's new monograph titled *Cigars: Health Effects and Trends*. Additional topics include past and recent trends in cigar smoking, the toxic and carcinogenic compounds found in cigar smoke, the addictive potential of cigar smoking, marketing and advertising of cigars, and the policies regulating taxation, labeling, and sale of cigars. "This monograph provides clear and invaluable information about the disturbing increase in cigar use and the significant public health consequences for the country," said Richard D. Klausner, M.D., director of the NCI. "The data are clear - the toxic substances and carcinogens in cigar smoke, like cigarettes, are

associated with increased risks of several kinds of cancers as well as heart and lung disease. In other words, cigars are not safe alternatives to cigarettes and may be addictive."

He added, "To those individuals who may be thinking about smoking cigars, our advice is - don't. To those currently smoking cigars, quitting is the only way to eliminate completely the cancer, heart, and lung disease risks."

### **Know What You're Getting**

The smoke released from cigars and cigarettes contain many of the same toxic agents (carbon monoxide, nicotine, hydrogen cyanide, ammonia and volatile aldehydes) and human carcinogens (benzene, vinyl chloride, ethylene oxide, arsenic, cadmium, nitrosamines, and polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons). However, the amounts of these substances present in cigar smoke are different than in cigarette smoke. For example, compared to a cigarette, a large cigar emits up to 20 times more ammonia, five to 10 times more cadmium (a cancer-causing metal) and methylethylnitro-samine (a cancer-causing agent), and up to 80 to 90 times as much of the highly carcinogenic tobacco-specific nitrosamines.

These differences are due to several factors: the long aging and fermentation process for cigar tobacco leaves results in higher concentrations of nitrate in cigar tobaccos; the nonporous cigar wrappers make combustion of cigar tobacco less complete than that of cigarette tobacco producing more toxic compounds in the smoke; the larger size of most cigars produces more smoke.

The result is that daily cigar smoking carries significant health risks. Not only can cigar smoking cause many cancers (oral cancers,

including throat cancer, and cancer of the larynx, esophagus, and lung) but also chronic obstructive lung disease and coronary heart disease. There is also evidence which strongly suggests that cigar smoking is associated with cancer of the pancreas. Many of these cancers - lung, esophageal, and pancreatic - are associated with extremely low survival rates.

For example, compared to nonsmokers, smoking one to two cigars per day doubles the risk of oral cavity (lip, tongue, mouth, throat) and esophageal cancers, and increases by six times the risk of cancer of the larynx.

### **How Many Cigars**

Cancer risks increase with the number of cigars smoked per day. Smoking three to four cigars per day increases the risk of oral cancers to 8.5 times the risk for nonsmokers; the risk for esophageal cancer is nearly four times as great as nonsmokers.

There are differences in the patterns of cigar and cigarette use. Most cigarette smokers smoke every day and inhale. In contrast, as many as three-quarters of cigar smokers smoke only occasionally, and some may smoke only a few cigars per year. (The health risks of occasional cigar smokers - less than daily - are not known.) The majority of cigar smokers do not inhale.

In spite of these differences, daily cigar smokers and cigarette smokers have similar levels of risk for oral (including throat), larynx, and esophageal cancers. Even among daily cigar smokers (smoking one or more cigars per day) who do not inhale, the risk of oral cancers is seven times greater than for nonsmokers and the risk for larynx cancer is more than 10 times greater than for nonsmokers.

Inhalation, however, does have a strong effect on disease risk. Compared to nonsmokers, daily cigar smokers who reported inhaling deeply had 27 times the risk of oral cancer, 15 times the risk for esophageal cancer, and 53 times the risk of cancer of the larynx.

Cigar smokers are also at increased risk for heart and lung disease compared to nonsmokers.

Regular cigar smokers who reported inhaling slightly have double the risk of chronic obstructive pulmonary (lung) disease and increase their risk of coronary heart disease by 23 percent.

However, compared to cigarette smokers, cigar smokers have lower risks for cancer of the larynx and lung as well as heart and lung disease.

Inhalation probably plays a strong role in lowering these risks. But, with regular use and

inhalation, the heart and lung disease risks of cigar smoking increase substantially, and for some diseases may approach the risks seen in cigarette smokers. In fact, the lung cancer risk from inhaling moderately when smoking five cigars per day is comparable to that from smoking one pack of cigarettes per day.

Another important focus of the monograph is the composition of secondhand smoke from cigars. Cigar smoke contains most of the same toxins, irritants, and carcinogens found in secondhand smoke from cigarettes, but many of these compounds occur in much higher quantities in cigars (including ammonia, carbon monoxide, respirable suspended particulates, and some of the most potent human carcinogens known, tobacco specific nitrosamines).

Researchers found that the concentrations of carbon monoxide at two cigar social events in San Francisco were higher than the levels found on a busy California freeway. Had these indoor exposures lasted eight hours, they would have exceeded the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for outdoor air established by the Environmental Protection Agency. In a separate study, smoke from a single large cigar burned in a home required five hours to dissipate. While no studies have been conducted to determine the health effects on nonsmokers at cigar social events, a significant body of evidence clearly demonstrates an increased lung cancer risk from secondhand smoke.

Besides the health effects, the monograph addresses the current trends in cigar smoking. Since 1993, cigar sales in the U.S. have increased by about 50 percent. Small cigar consumption has increased modestly, about 13 percent, whereas consumption of large cigars has increased nearly 70 percent.

This marks a reversal in a 20-year decline in cigar smoking from 1973 to 1993. Most of the increase appears to be among teenagers and young adult males who smoke occasionally (less than daily).

Smoking surveys show that the current level of cigar smoking among adolescents exceeds the use of smokeless tobacco. For example, the authors report that a 1996 survey of Massachusetts students in grades six to 12 showed that cigar use (smoked a cigar in the last 30 days) ranged from 3.2 percent in sixth grade to as high as 30 percent in high school. These rates are double the use of smokeless tobacco. The same survey showed that 6 percent to 7 percent of girls in grades nine to 11 reported they had used cigars in the past month. In general,

twice as many teenage boys compared to girls are likely to smoke cigars.

The greatest increase in adult cigar smoking is among young and middle-aged (ages 18 to 44) white males with higher than average incomes and education. Adult males are about eight times more likely to smoke than females.

The health consequences of regular cigar use, along with the increased use in teenagers, raises several concerns among public health officials. Addiction studies with cigarettes and spit tobacco clearly show that addiction to nicotine occurs almost exclusively during adolescence and young adulthood when young people begin using these tobacco products. The high rates of adolescent use of cigars may result in higher rates of nicotine dependence in this age group. Recent data suggest that cigar smoking today begins at a much younger age than in the past when it was begun primarily as an adult.

Donald R. Shopland from NCI's Smoking and Tobacco Control Program and the coordinator of the monograph, commented that the health risks posed by cigars have been overlooked because for decades cigar use has been so insignificant compared with cigarette smoking. The increased use since 1993 may be a sign that some people, particularly the young, see cigars as a safer alternative to cigarettes. "The new monograph sets the record straight," said Shopland.

More than 50 scientists and other experts outside the government were involved in the compilation of the monograph, including 30 who participated as peer reviewers. David M. Burns, M.D., professor of medicine at the University of California in San Diego, Calif., was the senior scientific editor for the monograph. The consulting scientific editors were Dietrich Hoffmann, Ph.D., associate director, American Health Foundation, Valhalla, N.Y., and K. Michael Cummings, Ph.D., M.P.H., senior research scientist, Roswell Park Cancer Institute, Buffalo, N.Y. A copy of the monograph is available by calling 1 800-4-CANCER or see below.

### **Background on Cigar Monograph:**

#### ***Cigars: Health Effects and Trends***

*(can be found @*

*<http://rex.nci.nih.gov/massmedia/backgrounders/cigarbk.htm>)*

The health risks associated with cigar smoking reported in this monograph are for daily cigar users (at least one cigar per day). The health risks associated with less than daily smoking

(occasional smokers) are not known. About three-quarters of cigar smokers smoke only occasionally.

Paula's comments: Despite lack of findings on periodic cigar use, my recommendation is to read this article and see what you are putting into your body. Carefully examine your exposure to second hand smoke of cigars. If you must have your occasional cigar, don't inhale, and smoke it outside instead of exposing yourself to the fumes for hours in a bar or someone's home.

## **Cigarett**

### **Being Proactive with Kids**

*Smoke-Free Kids & Soccer is an innovative collaboration of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), the U.S. Women's National Soccer Team, and U.S. Soccer. Participating DHHS agencies include the National Cancer Institute and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. This campaign promotes participation in soccer as a positive, healthy alternative to tobacco use; it offers free vibrant posters and tips to help teens model the success and smoke-free lifestyle of National Team members via web site: [www.smokefree.gov](http://www.smokefree.gov).*



## **Easiest Way to Stop a Nosebleed**

Nosebleeds are most common in children, but adults get them too. Luckily, most aren't serious and are easy to stop quickly:

- **Sit** with your head leaning slightly forward so that blood can run out the front of the nose--not down the throat.

Keep your mouth open and breathe through it.

- **Pinch** the lower part of the nostrils shut for 10-15 minutes. *Helpful:* Apply an ice pack over the nose area to help control bleeding.
- **Release** the nostrils slowly. If bleeding continues, repeat the procedure.

### When The Bleeding Stops

Avoid touching or blowing the nose, bending over, overexerting yourself, consuming hot drinks or alcoholic beverages, or smoking or taking aspirin for a week. Elevate the head with two pillows when lying down.

### When To Get Help

If bleeding continues after the second attempt, see a physician. And if the nosebleed starts after a heavy blow to the head, the victim should be taken to a hospital without delay. Reason: The nosebleed could indicate a fractured skull.

*Source: TopHealth Wellness Letter, September 1998*

## Inspiration Point

### What's Important to You?

If someone asked you to name the most important things in your life, what would you list --your family, your faith, your health, your special friend, your integrity, your career? It is a question that very rarely gets asked of us by other people.

Yet, every day life asks that question. And every day we answer. The answer is not in words, but in action. The actions you take on a daily basis speak louder than any claims you might make as to the most important things in your life. The way you spend your time, the things to which you give your attention, and the areas to

which you commit your resources, present a clear and undeniable picture of your true priorities.

Are your priorities what you think they are? Look at your actions. Look at your results. Look at the life you've built for yourself. Does your reality agree with your vision? Success and fulfillment come not from what we think would be nice, but from what we actually do, hour after hour, day after day.

Your life at this moment is an accurate representation of the things that have truly been important to you in the past, of whatever you have been committed to achieving. With that in mind, ask yourself -- what's important to you now?

### LOW SELF-ESTEEM INHIBITS WEIGHT LOSS

A new study out of Stanford University suggests that poor body image makes it even harder to lose weight. Researchers studied 90 overweight men and women who followed a low-fat diet and attended walking or jogging classes three times a week. After a year, only half of the participants had kept up with the program, and those most likely to fail were women who were extremely unhappy with their bodies - even though they weren't any heavier than the others. Psychologists speculate that women who are embarrassed by the way they look may shy away from working out in groups and that they may be more successful if they learned to be less critical of their bodies or commit to exercising at home or with a friend. (Source: Health, January/February 1999)





## Fit Fact Tips

✓Extra protein will not enhance your efforts to build larger muscles. If you consume protein in excess of your caloric and protein needs, any extra protein will either be excreted or converted to fat. (global-fitness.com)

✓Even low- intensity exercise reduces anxiety levels in women with high anxiety. Women who cycled for 20 minutes on a stationary bicycle at 40% of their maximum capacity reported a significant reduction in anxiety. (American College of Sports Medicine, and Vitality Magazine)

✓These are the most common mistakes people make when they're working out at gyms: Not warming up or cooling down; Exercising at too high of an intensity, too fast; Jerking free weights; Eating energy bars during a moderate workout; Leaning on stair climber handrails (American Council on Exercise and Vitality Magazine).

✓An ounce of prevention. Of the four most common cancers in the United States, three can be significantly reduced or prevented through diet and lifestyle changes: breast cancer (Potential reduction 33% to 50 %); colon/rectal cancer (66% to 75%); and lung cancer (90 to 95%).

✓To help your children develop good eating habits, try to make mealtimes pleasant and calm so family members can enjoy one another. Also, solve family problems at another time- don't use food as a reward or punishment, and serve a variety of healthy foods. (Source: global-fitness.com)

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## Veins, Veins, Go Away

More than 40 million Americans develop varicose veins, which tend to run in families. Prevention: Maintain ideal weight, since excess pounds put extra pressure on veins...avoid prolonged sitting or standing in one place...try regular leg exercise, such as stair climbing.

Source TopHealth August 1998

## ✓Easy Fix For Foot Pain

Try this: If your foot or heel is bothering you, place a can of frozen juice concentrate on the floor and lightly roll your heel and arch over it. You'll combine the benefits of ice massage and stretching. For extra relief: Afterward, pull your toes upward for a few seconds. Source: TopHealth, September 1998

✓To add more fiber to your diet: Eat whole fruit, especially apples, oranges, strawberries and pears. Prepare salads with spinach or romaine lettuce instead of iceberg lettuce. Snack on dried fruits. Bake with whole-wheat flour. Eat legumes at least three times a week.

This newsletter is intended solely for the Coast Guard Headquarters Staff in conjunction with the Coast Guard Headquarters Wellness Program. It is designed to inform Coast Guard personnel about the latest health information to assist them in developing a healthy lifestyle. Articles in this publication are taken from various health resources. Comments and contributions should be directed to the

Editor—

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# Recipes

## Potato Salad

Makes: 8 servings

### Ingredients:

- 2-1/2 pounds potatoes
- 1 hard boiled egg, chopped
- 3 tablespoons non/lowfat mayonnaise
- 3 tablespoons non/lowfat sour cream
- 1/4 cup dill relish
- 1 tablespoon green onions, chopped
- 2 tablespoons mustard
- 1 teaspoon dried tarragon

### Directions:

- Steam potatoes for 20 minutes. Rinse potatoes under cold water to cool.
- Directions: Combine remaining ingredients in a bowl.
- Peel potatoes and cut into chunks and mix into egg mixture.

### Nutritional Information:

*Serving Size: 1 cup  
Calories: 175; Fat: 2 g; Cholesterol: 40 mg; Protein: 9 g; Carbohydrates: 30 g  
Fiber: 3 g; Sodium: 190 mg*

## Teriyaki Chicken Burgers

### Ingredients:

- 1 lb. fresh lean ground chicken
- 1 cup corn flakes cereal, crushed
- 2 tsp of sugar
- 1 tsp grated gingerroot
- 1 tsp soy sauce
- 1/2 tsp sesame oil
- 2 green onions, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced

### Directions:

In a large bowl, combine all ingredients; mix well. Shape mixture into 6 patties, 1/2 inch thick.

- When ready to grill, lightly oil grill rack. Place patties on grill over medium heat or on charcoal grill 4 to 6 inches from medium coals. Cook 8 to 10

minutes or until burgers are no longer pink in the center, turning once.

- To prepare burgers under broiler, broil 4 to 6 inches from heat for 8 to 10 minutes or until burgers are no longer pink in the center, turning once.

Nutritional information per serving (one burger): 180 calories, 7 grams fat (35%), 14 grams carbohydrate, 15 grams protein, 55 mg. cholesterol, 260 mg. sodium

## Swordfish Tacos

### Ingredients:

- 1 lb. swordfish steaks, cut 1/4 inch thick
- 2 t. vegetable oil
- 1 T. chili powder
- 6 corn flour tortillas
- 1-1/2 cups chunky salsa
- 2 cups lettuce, shredded
- 1/3 cup low-fat sour cream

### Directions:

- Rub the swordfish steaks with the oil, then sprinkle with chili powder.
- Grill the steaks for eight minutes, until they're just cooked through; turn them once.
- At the edge of the heat, grill the tortillas, wrapped in foil, for three

minutes or until they're heated through.

- Cut the swordfish steaks into thin slices. Mix with two-thirds of the salsa and spoon into the tortillas.
- Sprinkle with the lettuce and fold the tortillas in half. Serve garnished with the sour cream and remaining salsa. Serves six.

Nutritional information per serving:  
247 calories, 8 grams fat (29%), 20 mg. cholesterol, 238 mg. sodium.

- Source: Vitality Magazine, July 1996

## Vegetable Fajitas

### Ingredients:

- fresh, cut up vegetables of your choice
- 1/4 cup lite soy sauce
- a few dashes of worcestershire sauce

- 1/4 cup rice vinegar

### Directions:

- Mix soy sauce, vinegar and worcestershire sauce.
- Sautee vegetables in sauce until tender.

- Wrap cooked vegetables in soft tortillas
- This recipe can be made the same way with cut up chicken or beef added in. Just double the amount of the liquid ingredients
- Serve with salsa, if desired

## Snacking for Energy

Snacks can be healthy and energizing. These snacks are generally nutritious and low in calories with little or no fat:

Cantaloupe	1/2 cup	24 calories
Carrot	1 medium	30 calories
Bell Pepper	1/2 cup sliced	20 calories
Nectarine	1 medium	67 calories
Yogurt	lowfat w/fruit	175 calories

Tomato J.	6 oz.	30 calories
Grapes	20	30 calories
Popcorn	2 cups	60 calories
	(air popped)	
Oatmeal/Raisin cookies	2	90cal